Alumni Job Search Intensive – Other Marketing Materials

Slide 1: Welcome alumni. This is week 2 of our job search intensive, and this webinar focuses on job search marketing materials in addition to your resume.

Slide 2: In today's job search market, a resume is often not enough to set you apart from the competition. You need to reinforce your individual brand, your strengths and accomplishments, in as many ways, and across as many mediums, as possible. Here are some marketing materials you should consider developing.

Slide 3: Cover letters, if done correctly, can be a powerful way to introduce you to prospective companies. They should be specifically targeted to each company and each job to which you apply, and are a good place to highlight elements of your brand that are particularly relevant to the job and company. Focus on your relevant problem solving and accomplishments, and again, your goal is to differentiate yourself from your competition, and to make a perfect match between your qualifications and the company's needs, so they can see you in the job. Conduct thorough research on the company so you can target your letter appropriately, and also demonstrate your interest in the company. Keep it short, but concise and focused on your relevant accomplishments and brand value.

Slide 4: Some people use a different form, a t-style letter, which lays out the company/job requirements on the left side, and your corresponding qualifications, with supporting examples, on the right, so that the matches can be easily seen. Now you’re able to make a compelling case that you’re the best candidate.

Slide 5: Portfolios are a great tool for showcasing your skills and expressing your brand, as they offer the opportunity to “show” instead of just “tell”. Be sure that you use the appropriate medium for your field and industry, both in terms of the media you use, and the content portrayed. There are opportunities for most fields. The creative fields come easily to mind, of course, but anyone can develop an online portfolio, in personal website that showcases your skills and accomplishments. For the computing industry, employers like to see code samples, and GitHub is a good vehicle for this purpose. As with your resume, you’ll want to have your portfolio reviewed, by your career services coordinator in our office, and by people in your targeted field or industry.

Slide 6: An online portfolio is crucial for everyone in the creative field to showcase their work, and Behance is one of the best portfolio sites. The creative world updates their work in one place to broadcast it widely and efficiently. Companies explore the work and access talent on a global scale. Rochester Institute of Technology now has a dedicated Behance Portfolio Gallery, sponsored by RIT Career Services. The RIT online gallery is a community for current students, alumni and faculty to share and discover creative work. By joining you'll gain more exposure for your portfolio and get noticed by employers and recruiters scouting for talent. Joining is easy and free. If you already have a Behance account, visit Portfolios.RIT.edu and then click Login. Use your existing AdobeID associated with Behance, fill out your RIT credentials, and you’re in! See our website for more information.
Slide 7: Everyone should have professionally printed business cards, that showcase your brand, not just your contact information. Some people use a title that is a good representation of their targeted job; otherwise you can use bullet points to highlight your brand attributes, or just a simple personal branding statement. Add links to your LinkedIn profile, to your personal website, and/or to your online portfolio. You can also use the back of the card to further support your brand and value, or keep it blank, so that those you meet can jot down notes about you. Carry these with you at all times, and bring to all networking functions and informational interviews. Sometimes they can take the place of resumes.

Slide 8: Develop a powerful elevator speech that introduces you and your brand, tells where you’ve been, why you’ve been successful, and where you want to go. You’ll use a form of this in networking situations and sometimes during an interview, when the recruiter asks you to “tell me about yourself.”

Your elevator speech should be a summary of your experiences, skills and future goals. So include where you’ve been – experience, background, what you have to offer and why you are the most qualified for this job/field/industry, and where you want to go – how you will use your experience and skills to succeed at the job or in the field.

When drafting your elevator speech, include your years of experience, areas of specialization or industry focus, relevant technical and transferable skills, accomplishments in previous jobs, activities or accomplishments during your time of unemployment – include any skills building or training, and desire position, or tailor to specific position your applying to. Prepare at least 2-3 versions – a base one that’s about 60 seconds, one for the telephone that’s about 30 seconds, and one for job fairs that’s about 15 seconds. Remember to emphasize the benefits and value you offer, tailor your speech to specific situations, and always end with a sentence that tells what you want to do now.

Slide 9: Again, a personal website is a great place to showcase your strengths, skills, accomplishments. You can include your resume, recommendations, papers you’ve written, summaries of projects you managed, design samples, coding samples – anything that reinforces your differentiated brand as it relates to your specific field. Another way to distribute your branded message is through a blog, or online log. Publishing is a good way to demonstrate your expertise in your field, and to demonstrate your tech savviness. If you are a decent writer and can commit to writing regularly, creating a professional blog is a great tool for building your career brand. A blog is a specialized Website that focuses on a particular subject (person, industry, profession) that can include news, analysis, commentary, and links in a variety of formats (including print, audio, images, and video). Showcasing your expertise and knowledge of your industry or profession is an excellent way to build your career brand. Darren Rowse’s How to Build Your Personal Brand Through Your Blog, has good information on branding through a blog, and I’ll add this resource to the materials and website for the Intensive program.

Slide 10: As a wrap up, think about what may be trending for your targeted industry or field. As we mentioned, candidates are taking advantage of multimedia options, including their own blogs and personal websites to highlight their qualifications, and even doing video resumes. If you do this be sure you exude confidence. Of course online portfolios with embedded samples of your work are a good option. Be sure your email and voice mail reflect your brand; have a targeted signature line in your email, and a professional voice mail message. There may be other ways to reflect and strengthen your brand, appropriate for your targeted field or industry; do some research and find out what those are and make sure you’re doing everything possible to present a cohesive, consistent brand. Your social
media profiles are a key part of your marketing strategy and materials, and we’ll discuss this in more detail in another webinar.

Slide 11: That’s it for this webinar. See your email or the website for suggested homework assignments, and as always, let me know if you have any questions.